

# The Warren Record

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## A Critical Challenge

Once again the rate of high infant mortality which plagues this county has been brought home.

On Thursday of last week, the Infant Mortality Task Force presented its report at the Governor's Conference on Infant Mortality and Morbidity. Attended by health officials, and business and civic leaders from across the state, the conference was held at Chapel Hill's Omni Europa Hotel.

North Carolina ranks ninth in the nation in infant mortality.

But Warren ranks a frightening fourth among the state's 100 counties.

The rankings are based on the number of deaths per 1,000 live births. Rates reported for neighboring counties were Franklin—14.1, Halifax—13.8, Northampton—24.9 and Vance—14.6.

Warren County Social Services Director Henry Hayes was a member of the task force, but was out of town this week and unavailable for comment. In his absence, Health Director Dennis Retzlaff, who attended the conference, shared the following insights.

The task force found that the availability and quality of prenatal and infant care is the single greatest factor for the best possible outcomes of pregnancies. Retzlaff concurred, but believes Warren County's situation to be different. "Almost no babies are actually born here and the time at which expectant mothers seek pre-natal care is well within normal ranges," Retzlaff said. He added that infant mortality is closely tied to poverty. "Any strategies which help to lift families out of poverty would reduce the infant mortality rates," he said.

In 1988, there were four infant deaths reported in Warren County. Retzlaff said education is an important tool in its reduction. "There appears to be a correlation between parental educational level and the ability to respond to medical situations involving infants," he said.

Retzlaff also added an even broader perspective to the problem. "When you talk of infant deaths, that is just the tip of the iceberg," he said. "The same factors which lead to infant deaths also lead to the number of babies born with serious health and developmental problems—problems which last a lifetime."

The Infant Mortality Task Force has made a number of recommendations. One of them is the expansion of Medicaid coverage to include pregnant women in families with incomes of up to 185 percent of the federal poverty level. Many expectant mothers lack the financial resources to seek prenatal care. Other recommendations include a media campaign and the creation of a program in this state to prevent premature births.

Governor Jim Martin last week said the state's infant mortality rate has been cut in half over the last 15 years from 27 deaths per 1,000 live births to 12. "We know we can do better," Gov. Martin said, as he called the reduction of the state's infant mortality rate "a critical challenge."

Retzlaff chairs a committee which, on March 22 of next year, will sponsor a "State Of The Child" conference. Infant mortality and the problem of "children having children" will be among the issues to be addressed.

In the meantime, we urge all expectant mothers to seek the prenatal care they need well within the first trimesters of their pregnancies; we urge all parents to attend immediately to the medical needs of their infants and youths; and we urge all teenagers to say "no" to drugs and all other temptations they face today.

## Looking Back Into The Record

November 11, 1949

Moonshiners lost a considerable amount of equipment and many gallons of potential "tiger juice" this week, as Warren's law enforcement officers raided stills in Fishing Creek and Warrenton townships.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry Fleming, Jr., of Warrenton, announce the birth of a daughter, Bonnie Gail, on Nov. 4 in the Hunter Clinic.

Mrs. S. A. Spain, of Norlina, announce the marriage of her daughter, Lelia Janet Spain, to Andrew C. Holtzman, of Ridge-way, on Oct. 15 in the home of the Rev. R. E. Brickhouse.

November 6, 1964

Since \$562,000 to be received here from the State Bond Issue passed last week will not be sufficient to meet the continuing needs of Warren County Schools, the boards of education and county commissioners will hold a joint meeting to find ways of raising more funds.

Willard Faucette, Warrenton resident and member of the Thomas Chapel Holiness Church, will be guest speaker for revival services at Warrenton Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Frank D. Perkinson, Jr.—son of Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Perkinson of Wise, and an advanced ROTC student at N. C. State—has been appointed S-1 of the Second Battalion.

November 15, 1979

John J. Hawkins, of Warrenton, will be honored as the first black Republican Party chairman in North Carolina at a two-day conference Nov. 16-17 in Raleigh.

Mr. and Mrs. Warren Pete Hilliard announce the approaching marriage of their daughter, Karen Lucille, to Lynn Henry on Nov. 18 at Macon Baptist Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Pete Smiley, of Norlina, announce the birth of a daughter, Adrienne Patricia, on Nov. 8 in Maria Parham Hospital.

## The Warren County Scene



You can tell that many of the birds have gone south, and the birdbath is dry, when Mrs. Robert Neal's cat turns the Eaton Avenue watering device into a convenient resting place warmed by the autumn sun.  
(Staff Photo by Phyllis H. King)

## Here and There

Howard Jones

### Paul Joins Phi Society

When Paul Dickerson of Warrenton joined the Philanthropic Society at the University of North Carolina last month, he joined an organization which is the second oldest student organization in the South, and which, with the Dialectic Society, counts among its former members senators, governors and a U. S. president.

In fact, Paul will tell you, the Societies have had a great impact on the history of the University and the country since they were formed in 1795. It was before the societies that President James K. Polk's ideas of Manifest Destiny were first discussed and debated while he was a member.

Originally, the organizations were begun as debating societies, and at one time every student was required to be a member of either the Di or the Phi.

The two societies were extremely competitive in early days, and a legend in Chapel Hill persists that duels were fought over prospective members.

There is no record of anyone being killed in a duel over a member, but the University's trustees passed a resolution about 1850 mandating that in-state students from east of Orange County—home of the University—had to join the Phi, while in-state students from west of Orange County had to join the Di. The only students to have a choice were Orange County students and those from out of state.

A large portion of the Societies' time is centered on debate and presentation of original papers, giving members an opportunity to put to use the knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom. The Societies created the school's honor system, originated the school colors, and endowed the University Library.

In 1886, when Louis Round Wilson convinced the Societies to begin donating their libraries to the University, each group owned more than 10,000 books, a much larger collection than that possessed by the University's library.

While the Societies no longer have such a profound influence on the University as was once the case, Paul will tell you, they still search for the betterment of student life in Chapel Hill.

They do it as have a number of their distinguished former members, who include 11 U. S. Senators, 13 governors and a host of other Carolina students who went on to achieve greatness in a number of fields.

Paul thinks he is one of three persons who have been members of the Di or Phi and who call Warren County home. In addition to himself, he has found that retired District Judge Julius Banzet of Warrenton and James C. Harris of Inez were Society members. Banzet was inducted in September 1917, and Harris was inducted in September 1927.

Like his fellow countymen before him, Paul gathers with about 50 other students on the top floor of New West, where for a short time the group, which looks upon itself as a mixture of Greek fraternity, literary magazine and debate team, does what college students do best—discuss and debate the pressing world, national and state issues of the day.

Perhaps Gov. William B. Umstead, a member of the Phi Society, put it best when he offered this commentary on the value of the Societies:

"If I had in my right hand everything that I learned in the halls of this Society and in my left hand everything I learned in the University, I wouldn't swap my experiences in debating for the other things I've learned here in the University."

...

A church member approached his minister one morning with an unusual proposition.

"I'll give you a case of brandy if you will acknowledge it in the bulletin next Sunday," the churchman offered.

"Certainly, I'll take it," the minister replied, and the transaction was made the next day.

The following Sunday the church bulletin carried this note from the minister:

"I want to thank my good friend, Brother Smith, for his very thoughtful and generous donation of fruit, and the spirit in which it was given."

...

Linda Moseley showed me a cartoon the other day which was sort of a put-down of men in general, but I nonetheless enjoyed it.

The cartoon showed a lady standing in the doorway talking with an encyclopedia salesman.

"We really don't have any need for a set of encyclopedias," the woman was saying. "We don't have any children and my husband knows it all."



Thurletta Brown

## A Last Tribute

Saturday of last week was Veteran's Day.

Around Memorial Day, I wrote about a number of black Civil War veterans who, after many years, were reinterred in their native soil as a part of South Carolina's Memorial Day observance.

This week, I have another story to tell about a veteran who—some 20 years, eight months and 13 days after most of his lower body was blown away—was finally reunited with his Vietnam comrades.

Freddie Paul Heugel was 19 years old and a Michigan service station worker when his draft notice arrived in 1968. On Feb. 23, 1969, he was manning a 105mm howitzer in a bunker some two miles from the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Suddenly, a mortar shell exploded and wounded a nearby comrade. A concerned Heugel ran to get medical assistance, but before he could succeed, the worst happened.

"I remember getting hit and smelling the gunpowder and then falling over backward. Then there was a medic leaning over me saying, 'Oh, my God! Oh, my God!'" Heugel said in a 1974 interview with the *Detroit News*.

Heugel was transferred to Japan for medical care. Not much hope was given for his survival. Physicians there telegraphed his family in Michigan telling them to come as quickly as they could.

But, one Japanese doctor did not give up. He suggested a series of amputations and the removal of 80 percent of Heugel's spine. The patient might never sit up again, but he would live.

After the surgery, Heugel was permanently confined in a prone (face down) position in a gurney (a type of stretcher on wheels). He spent four years in hospitals beating the odds which had been given on how long he would last.

Despite his misfortune, Heugel was a "miracle man." He taught himself to drive a specially modified van. He volunteered in Rep. William Ford's (D-Mich.) campaign. "People would marvel at how he'd drive up in his van, wheel himself out on his gurney...I never heard a bitter word out of him," Rep Ford once said. Heugel played pool, read and became interested in photography.

But there was still a lot of suffering in Heugel's life: heavy doses of painkillers, dialysis treatments, cirrhosis of the liver from a blood transfusion and heart deterioration.

At the age of 35, Cpl. Heugel died on May 12, 1984.

And then more problems started. Heugel's name was submitted in 1987 for inclusion on the black, granite Vietnam Veterans' Memorial in Washington D.C. Because of bureaucratic red tape, however, it took the Pentagon a full year to grant the request that Heugel's name be one of the more than 58,000 names inscribed on the memorial.

Now Heugel has been reunited with his comrades who sacrificed their lives in Vietnam. His name, as well as those of 19 other servicemen who were recently added to the memorial, was dedicated in a ceremony held in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, Nov. 11.

Twenty years, eight months and 13 days is not a lifetime, but it probably felt like one to the family and supporters of Cpl. Freddie Paul Heugel.

I'm glad the waiting is over and that he is at peace at last.

## Notes From All Over

Diane Davis

### Learning The Truth

Readers of this column know that I typically like to write about the funny side of things. But, from time to time I find myself without anything funny to write about (and with a lot of dirty jokes that aren't fit to print).

This week I've found a topic that isn't funny, but rather very serious. I want to use this space to write about something important to all of us—education.

American Education Week is this week, and we all should stop and think about what our education means to us. Without an education, none of us would be able to read or write. Without an education, our society would crumble and dollars and cents would mean nothing.

We must learn so that our kids will have a better world to live in when they grow older. We must learn to achieve goals in life and to make decisions that are right for us. In three words, we must learn.

Marktonio Royster, a student at Warrenton County High School, wrote this poem for American Education Week as a part of Warren County Schools' observance. The message he conveys through his rhyme deserves special attention.

YOU MUST LEARN

You want to progress and improve yourself, go to school and learn. You wish for a nice house and fancy cars, well these things you must earn.

Sex, drugs and alcohol will cause you devastation.

Play it smart, don't get involved, but get an education.

Unlike the past, there are numerous opportunities now to enhance your mind.

Don't neglect the fact that opportunity knocks, and gradually fall behind.

'7e are the future and our education is of greatest concern.

So, strive to achieve, go to school—remember, you must learn!

## Letter To The Editor

To The Editor:

It has come to my attention that we, America's children, are very lucky. We are free: Free to learn, live and do what we want without having to worry about what the government will do to us.

As an average American child, I don't like to get up every weekday morning to go to school. But when I get there, my mind changes. I see all my friends, but it is not the socializing that I enjoy.

I especially enjoy my social studies classes. I love to learn new things: things about the past, the present and also about the up-and-coming future.

Speaking of the future, as a citizen of Warren County, I do think our school system could be improved—and no doubt, we are improving already.

As a student in Warren County, I want to strive for excellence. With the improvements being made, excellence is even more possible than ever!

Schools have improved greatly since my parents attended. My parents want me to get the best possible schooling. I have the same wish for my children. That's why I want to encourage my fellow classmates to learn. This is truly coming from my heart. I do believe everyone should try to be the best they can be.

LESLIE COPLEY  
Seventh Grader  
John Graham